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# SERMON

Preach'd before

*Oliver Cromwel* Protector,

AT

*Hampton-Court* Chappel, *Anno* 1655.

*By* JAMES THOMPSON, *Minister of that Parish.*

*LONDON:*

Printed for R. *Jones* near *Corn-Hill.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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## *Oliver Cromwel, &c.*

Proverbs xxix. *ver.* ii.

*When the Righteous are in Authority the People Rejoyce, but when the Wicked bear Rule, the People Mourn.*

THEY that live in Kings Houſes, as they uſe to wear ſoft Rayment, (according to the ſaying of the *Evangeliſt*) and do live delicate Lives, ſwimming in Eaſe, Pleaſure, and the plentiful Fulneſs of all Sublimary Enjoyments, therein ſporting themſelves like the Swans in the ſwift gliding Stream, ſo likewiſe they uſually have nice and delicate Fancies, delighting rather in ſuch Notions as may tickle the Ear, than that which may affect the Heart and convince the Conſcience: Hence it was, that good *Micaiah* could not find acceptance in the Days of *Ahab*, and that *Elias* the Prophet was call'd, The Troubler of *Iſrael*, and *Amos* was Slander'd as Guilty of Conſpiracy, becauſe they Preach'd the Truth impartially in the Name of the Lord: The like Entertainment had

had St. *John* the Baptiſt with *Herod*, for ſpeaking againſt his *Herodias*; ſuch had St. *Chryſoſtom* from *Eudoxia* the Empreſs; they and many others have found that old Saying too true, *Impartial Truth finds many Enemies, but few Friends:* Tho' few, yet ſome there have been, who like *David* have ſaid, *Let the Righteous ſmite me and it ſhall be a kindneſs, let him reprove me, it ſhall be as an excellent Oyl:* Sound Truths pleaſe Wiſe Men more than Pompous Flouriſhes; therefore, ſaith the Apoſtle, *I come not to you with inticing Words, with excellency of Speech of Man's Wiſdom, but in the Demonſtration of the Spirit, and with Power*; with ſuch faithful Plainneſs as this do I this Day preſent unto you theſe Words, which were ſpoken by the Wiſeſt of Men, and greateſt of Princes,

*When the Righteous are in Authority the People rejoyce, but when the Wicked bear Rule, the People Mourn.*

Which Speech of *Solomons*, like a certain Herb of *Arabia*, yieldeth both Honey and Aloes, Sweet and Bitter, Sweet in the beginning, *When the righteous are in Authority, the People rejoyce*, Bitter in the concluſion, *When the wicked bear rule, the People Mourn.*

To begin therefore with the firſt, which ſheweth the Happineſs of a People in a good Governour, *when the Righteous are in Authority*, there is the Suppoſition, *the People rejoyce*, there is the Poſition.

Righteous in Authority! A welcome Meeting, this wherever it is, and an Auſpicious Conjunction; it is ſo in my Text; *What God hath ſo joyned together, let no Man put aſunder*; Righteous and Authority are not only conſiſtent each with other, but alſo very ſuitably conſonant, happily Prognoſtica-

nosticating much Felicity to all that shall live under such a desirable Aspect; which sufficiently appeareth, by the Glorious Times which the *Jews* had under the Reign of *Moses*, *Joshua*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Josias*, and others that Ruled in Righteousness, such are promised as a great Blessing in *Esa.* 2. 25. *I will restore your Judges as at the first, and your Counsellors as at the beginning.* The Truth of this Proposition will be farther evident by considering,

I. The *Essential Properties*, } of a good *Governour*.
II. The Royal Actings, }

For the *First*, his Essential Properties, we need look no farther than that of *Jethro* to *Moses*, *Ex.* 18 21. *Thou shalt provide able Men fearing God; Men of Truth, hating Covetousness.* First, able Men, able, not so much for Strength of Body, as in Abilities of the Mind, of able Parts, of good Wit and Dexterity, able in Knowledge, Understanding and Wisdom, able in the Knowledge of God the supreme over all, able in in the Knowledge of themselves Mortal Worms, Crowned Sinners; able in the Knowledge of Human Affairs, able in the Knowledge of Religion, and the Laws of God and Man, whereby they may conduct themselves and those which are under them, in the way of Righteousness, according to the Mind of God, not leaving it to every Man to do what seemeth right in his own Eyes, as it was in those Days when there was no King in *Israel*, *Exod.* 18. 19, 20. *Thou shalt teach them Ordinances and Laws, and shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work which they must do.*

This Wisdom and Knowledge is very necessary, for it is the very Eye of the Soul and the Light of it, it is the Helm of Reason, Life's Guardian, and Man's Glory. The great World without the

Sun where no better than a large Dungeon, ſo Man, that Microcoſm, without Wiſdom what is he but *Ignus Fatuus*, or a blazing Comet? Wiſdom is profitable for all Things, for Political, Domeſtick, and Military undertakings; therefore the *Indians* (ſaith *Caſſius* in his Hieroglyphicks) were wont to take Fire from the Altar *Mithra*, *i. e.* the the Sun, and with great Joy carry it before their Kings; this Fire, he ſaith, is Heavenly Wiſdom, and the Sun ſignifieth God, the Alter the Church: True Wiſdom from God by his Church going before as a ſhining Light proveth always joyfully Auſpitious. But as they muſt be able in Wiſdom, ſo they muſt in Fortitude to; of undaunted Courage and Reſolution, that they may grapple with Difficulties, repel Aſſaults, bear the Heat and Burden of the Day; For as the Nerves and Sinews are to the Body, ſo is Fortitude to the Mind; without this, like *Reuben*, it is unſtable as Water, and cannot excel: They ſhould be able for Worth and Honour too: and in Dignity and Riches, otherwiſe they will poll the Flock to cloath themſelves; therefore *Solomon* ſaith, *Bleſſed art thou, O Land, when thy King is the Son of Nobles.*

The Second Property, they muſt be Men fearing God, fearing to offend him, or to do any thing without Warrant from him; this Holy fear is the Foundation and Nurſe of Vertues, by the Fear of the Lord Men depart from Evil; it is good therefore to intermingle it in all Imployments and Conditions to Rejoyce with Fear, to feed with Fear, to Rule and Judge with Fear, to paſs the whole time of Sojourning in Fear; great Men eſpecially have need of it; ſeeing that by Reaſon of their Might and Forces they do ſet themſelves above the Fear of Mortals; what Wrong

and Impiety will they not commit, contray to Obligations, If they be not poſſeſt with the Fear of God; but where that is, it will keep the Mind in even poiſe towards God and Man; thus it was with good *Nehemiah*, *Nehe.* 5. 15. Whereas other Men did thus and thus Tyrannically and Wickedly (ſays he) *ſo did not I, becauſe of the Fear of my God*, I cauſed them to make Reſtitution of Lands and Goods which had been taken away, this I did, *becauſe of the Fear of my God*: This was the happy product of a Holy Fear; and thus to fear, to fear Sin out of a Love to Vertue which (as *Aquinas* hinteth) is a diſpoſition ſuitable for the moſt Heroick Spirit, it is no Cowardiſe but Valour thus to Fear God and eſchew Evil; it is an Honour even for Kings thus to be Servants to the moſt High, *the King of Kings*, and to ſerve with Fear a faithful Moniter, a ſecure Guard, a glorious Ornament, a greater Ornament than a Crown of Gold, or a Scarlet Robe, as *David* found by Experience the Benefit of it in that Caſe of *Saul* the King of *Iſrael*, whom when he had caught at an apparent Advantage, and was ſolicited to cut him off after he had ſuffered ſo much by him, had been hunted like an Owl in the Deſart, and a Pelican in the Wilderneſs, his Soldiers urged him vehemently to deſtroy his Life, yet being overawed with the fear of God, he durſt not do it, no nor yet ſuffer them to do it, whereby to make themſelves guilty of Regicide; *The Lord forbid that I ſhould ſtretch forth my hand againſt him, ſeeing he is the Lord's Anointed; the Lord forbid that I ſhould do this thing to my Maſter, the Anointed of the Lord*; yea, tho' *Saul* was rejected of God, tho' he had ſhed much innocent Blood, had Slain Fourſcore and Five of the Prieſts of the Lord in one Day, and tho' Providence (ſo much pleaded amongſt us) ſeemed ſo clear for *David* againſt

gainſt him, tho' *David* was in continual Fear of his Life, by reaſon of him, tho' the cauſe of God, the Reformation and Wellfare of the Church depended upon it, tho' Neceſſities and ſelf Preſervation (the great Pleas now for the irregular Actings) did all concur together, yet he durſt not ſtretch forth his Hand *againſt the Lord's Anointed*; and when afterwards he did but cut off a Skirt of his Garment, not a Member from his Body, not his Head from his Shoulders, for this his Heart ſmote him, and he ſaid furthermore, *Who can ſtretch forth his Hand againſt the Lord's Anointed and be guiltleſs?*

The *Third* Property of good Governours; They are to be Men of Truth, there is Speculative Truth, and Practitial Truth, Truth of Doctrine, Truth of Life and Practice: When the Converſation is framed according to the Rule of Truth; Truth of Juſtice and Righteouſneſs; A ſettled Will to do right in every Thing to all Men. Sometimes Truth is oppoſed to Hypocriſy, ſo it ſignifieth ſincerity; Sometimes to Error, ſo it is the ſame with Sound Doctrine, or Soundneſs in the Faith; Sometimes it is oppoſed to Lying, Diſſimulation, Flattery, or Ambition, or whatſoever Cunning Artifice is uſed to ſupplant and deceive Men.

Firſt then they are to be Men of Truth, as oppoſed to Hypocriſy, *i. e.* Sincere and Faithful, not uſing Religion as a Cloak or Colour for any Wicked Deſign as *Herod* pretended great Zeal for Chriſt, enquiring dilligently where he was Born, that ſo he might come to worſhip him, when as his Purpoſe and Intent was at the ſame time to deſtroy him; *Jehu* cry'd up Reformation, *Come and ſee my Zeal* (ſays he) *for the Lord*, whereas it was a Zeal only for himſelf to eſtabliſh him in his Power

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and Kingdom. *Absolom* pretended Devotion to pay his Vows, but was really bent upon Rebellion and Conspyracy. On the contrary *David* had this Property in him, that he was a Man of Truth, real for God's Worship and Honour, *Psal.* 18 21. This Sincerity is the very Life of Godliness, and Soul of Christianity, without which a Professor is but as a whited Sepulchre, a rotten Post guilded over; happy therefore is that Nation whose Governours are *Nathaniel's Israelites* indeed, whose Praise is not of Men but of God.

*Secondly*, Men of Truth as opposed to Injustice, their Glory should be to be cloath'd with the Royal Robe of Justice, girt about with the Girdle of Truth, for Royalty without Righteousness is but eminent Dishonour, and Government without Justice degenerates into Tyranny, and is Robbery by Authority: Right or Righteousness is the Foundation of Peace and Happiness; Thrones are establish'd by Righteousness, and Subjects are best regulated by Righteousness, it is the Defence of the Country, the Peoples Freedom, the Joy of Mankind, the Calm of the Sea, the Fruitfulness of the Earth (as St. *Cyprian* excellently) the Comfort of the Poor, the Groundwork of Prosperity, and Hope of Future Glory, let Rulers exalt Righteousness and it will exalt them; it was therefore a good Practice in *Solomons* Time, whensoever he ascended his Throne, a *Cryer* was appointed to say to him, *Wrest not Judgment, respect not Persons, take no Bribes*, &c. Meaning, that he should steer all According to Right and Truth, and neither by Fear or Favour, Gain or Damage, be diverted from it.

Thirdly, Men of Truth, as opposed to Error, Men of a Right Judgment, Sound in the Faith; Because Unsoundness in the Head is dangerous to the

the whole Body; Truth is neceſſary for all Men, but eſpecially for the Higheſt among Men, as it is neceſſary, ſo it is enabling too, a precious Jewel, fit to be Inamelled in the Crowns of Princes, to be Cabbineted in the Heart of Nobles. *Fourthly.* Men of Truth in Oppoſition to Diſſimulation, Lying, Fraud, Flattery, Ambition or any ſuch like deceitful Artifices, which *Abſolon* uſed, whereby to advance himſelf to his uſurped Power, *Sam.* 2. 15. Thus much for the Third Property, Men of Truth.

The Fourth is, Men hating Coveteouſneſs; this is anſwerable to the Apoſtle's Admonitions, *Heb.* 13. 5, *Let your Converſation be without Coveteouſneſs, and be content*; the like precept was by St. *John Baptiſt* commended to the Soldiers that came to him, *Do Violence to no Man, neither accuſe any falſly, but be content with your Wages.* Coveteonſneſs, like the Horſe-Leech is ever craving, give, give, it is greedy as the Grave, cruel as Death, the Mother and Nurſe of all Vices, Rapine, Injuſtice, Murder, Rebellion, Sacriledge, Oppreſſion, and what not? What made *Achon* ſteal the Gold and the *Babiloniſh* Garment? What made *Zimri* Conſpire againſt his Maſter? What made *Heliodorus*, Treaſurer of *Seleucus* King of *Aſia*, take away the Treaſure of the Temple? And ſo *julian* and others; what moved them to ſuch Acts of wickedneſs, but the inſatiable Dropſy of Covetonſneſs? Covetouſneſs draweth all waters to its own Mill, and what doth it grind but the Faces of the poor? it ſeeketh to feather its own Neſt with others Plumes, and to Build his own Houſe with the downfal and ruin of the Houſe of God, therefore no wonder was it that the Prophet *Habbacuk* denounced ſuch a dreadful Evil againſt this Sin, *Chap.* 2, 6, 7, 9, 12. *Verſes, Woe to him that increaſeth*

*eth that which is not his, how long? They ſhall riſe up ſuddenly that ſhall bite thee, and awake that ſhall vex thee; woe to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his Houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, woe to him that buildeth at own with blood and ſtabliſheth a City by iniquity*; this being ſo great an Evil, the neceſſity of this Qualification is evident, hating Covetouſneſs.

Let me add a Fifth Property, they are to have a due call to their Government; *Thou ſhalt provide out of the People Men of Truth, fearing God*, &c. This is according to the Apoſtle's Admonition. *Let no Man take upon him this honour, but he that is called, as was*, Aaron; happy are the People, when God can ſay of the Rulers; They are a me, *per* me *pro* me, from me, by me, and for me: *i. e.* of God's ſupporting, and for God's Glory without this, How ſhall they anſwer the Demand of their own Conſcience, who made thee a Judge and a Ruler over us? *David* got his Kingdom, and ſo all the pious Kings of *Judah*, not by Diſſimulation and Flattery, like *Abſolon*, nor by Wrong and Cruelty, like *Abimelech*, but by harmleſs integrity, by Birthright and Lawful Deſcent, or by ſpecial Command or Warrent from God, being rightly Called and Anointed thereunto: This ſufficeth to ſhew the Eſſential Properties of a good Governor.

The Second Demonſtration of the Truth of the Propoſition is taken from his Royal Actings: To name only ſome of them; Firſt, His principal Care is to contrive all, eſpecially his Publick Affairs by wholſome Counſel, for otherwiſe great Men may ſoonerr for want of Counſel, or be miſled by evil Counſel, therefore the Primitive Chriſtians were wont to pray for their Emperors, that God would ſend them faithful Counſellers, as knowing that the Welfare of a Kingdom depends

pends not ſo much on the Multitude of the Valiant Warriours, as of Wiſe Counſellors; as was ſometimes ſaid of the *Romans, where no Counſel is* (ſaith *Solomon*) *the People periſh, but in the Multitude of Counſellers there is ſafety.*

2*dly*. A Righteous Ruler accuſtometh himſelf to Acts of Clemency and Meekneſs, not Severity and Tyranny, according to the Precept *Lev.* 25. 43 Such a one was *Moſes, the Meekeſt Man upon Earth*; ſuch as was *Auguſtus*: It is ſaid that he refuſed to be called Lord, but would be called Father of his Country: He had ſuch indeared Affections for the Common-Wealth that he uſed to call it his Daughter, reſolving that he would govern by love, not by Fear: He was wont to weep when at any time he was put upon any Acts of Severity. Naturaliſts do obſerve, that among the Bees (who have kind of Monarchy) the Maſter Bee is without a Sting, Nature it ſelf hereby prompting what Governours would be, both in themſelves and towards others.

3*dly*, A Rigteous Ruler doth with unceſſant Vigilancy ſtand upon the Defence of the Laws, Rights, Intereſt and Welfare of the People, as is obſerved of ſome Birds whilſt they are feeding one of them doth keep aloft watching that no danger may approach them without Notice; ſo Magiſtrates are as the * Watchmen of the Nation, and the Sword is put into thesr Hands that they may uſe it for the Protction of their People, and and the Terror of their Enemies, therefore they are called the Shields of the Earth, and Pillars of the World: Without them the Univerſe would ſoon totter and real until it returns into its ancient Chaos; their Care is for the publick good of all, rather then their own private Concerns, therefore in *Jotham*'s Parable of the Trees, the Vine,

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the Olive, and the Fig-Tree, are made Choice of for the reſemblance of a good King; he is like the Olive for fatneſs, and giving Oyl for healing, like the Figtree for ſweetneſs, and like the Vine making glad the Heart of Man. It is Storied of *Veſpaſian*, that when he did at any time call to Mind any Day wherein he had done ſome notable Act of publick Beneficence, he was wont to ſay, I have loſt a Day, was for his Bounty accounted a Sea of Benignity, a Fathomleſs Ocean of Kindneſs and Mercy, unſpeakable and unimitable in his Noble Vertues, like the River *Nilus*, diſpenſing his Streams into the Field of his Government, and making them fruitful in all Wealth and Proſperity: And ſuch a one was *Conſtantine* the Great, the Firſt Chriſtian Emperor, in whoſe Days there was ſo much Plenty and Riches, that as St. *Auguſtin* ſays of him, 'It is not Lawful 'for any to ask the like at the Hands of God, for 'themſelves or others.

4*thly*, It is the Practice of a good Governour to hear Complaints and redreſs the Grievance of their Subjects. To this purpoſe it was ſaid of *Adrian* the Emperor, when a certain Woman called out to him to do her right, and he replied I am not at leiſure, ſhe replied again, then be not at leiſure to be an Emperor: At this Speech he ſtayed and heard her Requeſt and Granted her Deſire. It is the Glory of Princes to ſtoop to the meaneſt of their Subjects to do them good; herein they ſhall be like the *King of Kings, who cauſeth his Sun to ſhine upon the good and bad, and whoſe Providence reacheth to the ſmalleſt Fly and meaneſt Worm Veſpaſian* uſed to ſay, it is not ſeemly to ſee any one go away ſad from a Princes Preſence, *Trajan* tore his own Imperial Robes to bind up his Soldiers Wounds: *Job* was alſo in this reſpect moſt admirable and

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worthy of Imitation, *Job* 29. *ver.* 12. to *ver.* 17.

5*thly*, It is the Practiſe of good Rulers to ſuppreſs and diſcountenance the Evil both of Vice and Prophaneneſs as alſo of Error and Hereſy; not ſuffering an intolerable Toleration for every *Man to do what is Right in his own Eyes*, not ſuffering gangreen Hereticks, untaught Teachers, Lay *Levites*, giddy Schiſmaticks; contentious Firebrands, to go about oppoſing the Truth, diſturbing the Peace of the Church and Orthodox Miniſtry, and and under pretence of Religion and Liberty, to deſtroy all Religion and true Reformation, and all Order in Church and State. *Arius* was but a ſmall Spark at firſt, but his Hereſy being not ſuppreſt in a ſhort Time, it did ſet the whole World in a Flame; Therefore it was a ſafer courſe that of *Gratian* and *Theodoſius*, who in their Times made ſtrict Laws againſt the Donatiſts and others that deviated from the Truth and Peace: So did Queen *Elizabeth* and King *James* againſt the Papiſts. On the contrary, *Julian* the Apoſtate, by tolerating all Weeds to grow, Hereticks and Pagans too ſought to choak the Chriſtian Religion. and utterly deſtroy it from the Earth.

6*thly*, The practiſe of good Rulers is to advance true Religion and Learning, to forward the Propagation of the Goſpel, to contend for the Truth, to maintain the true Worſhip of God, to Countenance Godlineſs and a Godly Orthodox Miniſtry: As they are greater in Place ſo they ſhould have this Holy Ambition to excel in Grace, improving their Power and Authority for the Glory of God, and the good of the Church *Solomon* was praiſe worthy in this, that he firſt took care to build the Houſe of God before his own Houſe: And *Jehoſhaphat* ſent *Levites* and Prieſts into all Places of his Dominions, to teach the People

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the Law of God, ſo did *Ezekias*, 2 *Chron.* 30. 22. *He ſpake kindly to them even to all the* Levites *which taught the good knowledge of God:* Away then with thoſe who ſay that Magiſtrates have nothing to do with Religion. Shall we ſay the Care of Religion belongeth not to them, or that they medling with theſe Sacred Matters do trangreſs the Bounds of Modeſty and Piety? Saith our Learned Biſhop *Jewell*, *The moſt Ancient and moſt Chriſtian Kings and Emperors in former times have taken care for theſe things, yet were never accuſed for it but commended:* And where may we find more Holy Princes or better Examples? Or why ſhould Magiſtrates now queſtion to walk in their Steps? The Apoſtle ſaith, *They are Miniſters of God to thee for Good, and a terror to Evil*, &c. Rom. 3. 4. upon which Place *Pareus* excellently ſays there is a fourfold good, Natural, Moral, Civil, Spiritual, and the Office of the Magiſtrate reacheth to all theſe: To natural good in defending the People in their Peace and Safety: To moral in reſtraining Vice and exciting to Virtue: To civil Good, in preſerving their Poſſeſſion, maintaining Society, Commerce, and publick Order and Honeſty: To ſpiritual good too, becauſe he is to defend and preſerve the Revenues of the Church, the publick Worſhip of God, the Preaching of the Word of God: To this Purpoſe the Examples of *Jehoſhaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Joſiah*, and other Worthies, are a ſtrong Inducement and Encouragement.

Thus I have run through the firſt Propoſition, that Righteous Magiſtrates are matter of great joy to the People, but as for the Miſeries of liviug under the Reign of bad Princes, I ſhall leave that to a more convenient opportunity.

*FINIS.*